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Uwaebuka Wisdom Madu Mr

*Department of Library and Information Science, Federal Polytechnic Ede, Osun State, Nigeria,*  
[madunwaebuka@federalpolyede.edu.ng](mailto:madunwaebuka@federalpolyede.edu.ng)

Chukwuemeka Ogbonnaya Azubuike Mr

*Department of Library, Archival and Information Studies, University of Ibadan, Oyo State Nigeria,*  
[azubuike\\_chukwuemeka@yahoo.com](mailto:azubuike_chukwuemeka@yahoo.com)

Helen Chris-Israel Mrs

*Department of Library and Information Science, Federal Polytechnic Ede, Osun State, Nigeria*

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**Evaluation of the Influence of Indigene-ship and Interpersonal Relationship on  
Employment of Staff in Selected Federal University Libraries in South-West, Nigeria.**

Uwaebuka Wisdom MADU

Department of Library and Information Science

Federal Polytechnic Ede

Osun State, Nigeria

[madunwaebuka@federalpolyede.edu.ng](mailto:madunwaebuka@federalpolyede.edu.ng), +2348065193697

Chukwuemeka Ogbonnaya AZUBUIKE

Department of Library, Archival and Information Studies

University of Ibadan

Oyo State, Nigeria

azubuike\_chukwuemeka@yahoo.com, +234 8033523989

AND

Helen CHRIS-ISRAEL

Department of Library and Information Science

Federal Polytechnic Ede

Osun State, Nigeria

## **Abstract**

*This study evaluated the influence of indigene-ship and interpersonal relationship on employment of staff in selected federal university libraries in South-West, Nigeria. The selected libraries are the Hezekiah Olowosanmi Library of Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife and Kenneth Dike library of the University of Ibadan. Two research objectives and two hypotheses were raised to guide the study. The ex-post facto research design was adopted, while census sampling technique was employed. The population comprised all the 143 professional and para-professional librarians in the libraries under study. A structured questionnaire was used for data collection. Data generated were analyzed using simple linear regression while t-test used to test the null hypotheses. The findings revealed that indigene-ship and interpersonal relationship have significant influence on employment of staff in libraries under study. Consequent upon the findings, it is recommended among others that employment equity regulating agencies should promote, monitor and enforce compliance with the principle of proportional sharing of employment opportunities across ethnic and tribal divides in federal government owned institutions in order to eliminate all forms of discrimination on the basis of indigeneity.*

**Keywords:** Indigene-ship, Interpersonal Relationship, Employment, University Libraries

## **Introduction**

University libraries need committed, competent, confident, dynamic, educated, motivated and trained workforce to provide information products, services and consultations according to the needs, desires and expectations of their users. Therefore, for the attainment of desired objectives of these libraries, sincere and organized human effort is essential. To this end, employment of staff in university libraries is a goal that is not only indispensable, but one that should be pursued with principles subsumed in certain variables that point to the employees' competence and eligibility. However, the process of recruiting university library staff has overtime been negatively influenced by various factors among which are indigene-ship and interpersonal relationship.

The concept of indigene-ship arises from ancestry and genealogy. It is a natural link between a person and his geographical location, or place of birth of the parents; where he traces his root through blood lineage and genealogy that puts him in contact with his kindred. It is a state of being a native of a particular place. Interpersonal relationship is a concept that suggests a strong, deep or close association/ acquaintance between two or more people that may range in duration from brief to enduring. The context can vary from family or kinship relations, friendship, marriage, relationship with associates, work, clubs, neighborhood and places of worship. In this study, this variable primarily focused on the possible mutual connections between recruitment panel members and applicants or their relatives that may influence who gets hired, employed, and deployed to discharge what functions to achieve the overall goals of these university libraries. This study aimed at evaluating the influence of indigene-ship and interpersonal relationship on employment of staff in Hezekiah Oluwasanmi Library, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife and Kenneth Dike Library, University of Ibadan.

### **Statement of Problem**

Securing the services of talented and qualified applicants through recruitment exercises in university libraries requires a process that is devoid of sentiments and prejudices. Observations and experiences of the researcher indicated that there seemed to be an increasing influence of interpersonal relationship and indigene-ship in recruitment exercises of most Nigerian university libraries. These variables are never made public during vacancy advertisements, yet their effects during recruitment processes appear undeniable. Unfortunately, review of previous studies indicated that the influence of interpersonal relationship and indigene-ship in recruitment exercises of Nigerian federal university libraries is silent, hence creating a gap in literature. This study was undertaken to fill this gap.

### **Objectives of the Study**

1. To assess the influence of indigene-ship on employment of staff in selected federal university libraries in South-West Nigeria.
2. To determine the influence of interpersonal relationship on employment of staff in selected university libraries in South-West Nigeria.

### **Null Hypotheses**

1. There is no significant influence of indigene-ship on employment of staff in the libraries under study.
2. There is no significant influence of interpersonal relationship on employment of staff in the libraries under study.

## **Review of Related Literature**

### **Indigene-ship and Employment of University Library Staff**

Indigene-ship is viewed in the context of this study from applicants' place of origin in relation to the location of the libraries and other factors like the provisions of employment equity programmes such as the Federal Character Principle, Catchment Area Policy, Quota System and other detailed procedures and processes established to minimize discrimination on the basis of nativity during recruitment exercises. Nwanegbo, Odigbo and Ochanja (2014), opine that the popular use of indigene-ship as a means of discriminating against other ethnic groups has become an important factor in the socio-economic life of Nigeria.

According to a report issued by the Nigerian Research Network (2014), the principle of indigene-ship is about 'ownership' of the community, local government or state. But this 'ownership', the report maintains, is not in the narrow sense of owning a piece of private property, but refers instead to the right to recognition as the pre-eminent ethnic group within the unit. It is about the right to determine the rules of engagement in the perking order for political and economic resources associated with the Nigerian state. In line of the above, Iwuagwu (2015), observes that in Nigeria, it is more profitable to be an indigene than to be a citizen since indigene-ship carries with it all the rights and privileges of citizenship whereas Nigerian citizenship does not carry with it the rights and privileges offered by indigene-ship. For instance, highly qualified Nigerian professionals cannot become Chief Medical Directors; Chief Judges; Accountant Generals; Library Directors in state government ministries outside their own states of origin, the author concluded.

Indigene-ship therefore effectively introduces a multifarious citizenship in Nigeria's 36 States and 774 Local Government Areas. Some can lay claim to ancestral connections to the soil and consequently enjoy indigene-ship rights; while others who have no such claims must therefore suffer different degrees of political and social exclusion (NRN, 2014). The provisions of the

constitution further compound the issue of indigene-ship in Nigeria. According to Yisa (2005), the consequences of the section 147 of the 1999 constitution is that it has created four types of Nigerians: the lucky ones who belong to the indigenous communities of the state of residence; the indigenes of other states who are expected to go back to their own states for any benefits; Nigerians who are unable to prove membership of any indigenous group in any state of the country; and women who are married to men in states other than their own, who are neither accepted in their states of origin nor in their husbands' states. This situation has great implications for non-indigenes seeking employment in federal university libraries because being a non-indigene in a particular state in Nigeria outside one's state of origin is near to being a non-Nigerian.

In Nigeria, there is an undue attachment and loyalty to ones ethnic nationality. This factor according to Nwanegbo, Odigbo and Ochanja (2014), makes indigenes of a particular ethnic group, state or local government to exclude other Nigerians from benefits that belong to all Nigerians simply because they are non-indigenes. Onwubiko (2004) believes that, in a society where allegiance is first to the tribe, followed by local government, state and then the country, there is bound to be internal politics during recruitment exercises especially in government owned institutions. The author further opines that, even when the University Librarian is detached and uninterested, the prevalent circumstances create problem for him. For instance, this problem is compounded in some areas where there is an unwritten policy that junior staff members should be recruited from within the locality where the library is located.

The federal character principle was incorporated as an employment equity policy having taken into cognizance the impervious and insistence demand by each ethnic group, no matter how numerically small, or how materially poor, or how educationally backward, for a fair and dignified place in the Nigeria sum. The federal character principle seeks to give opportunities in education and employment, usually at the point of entry, to disadvantaged groups and areas to enable them compete and catch up with more advanced areas and sectors of the Nigerian nation (Anyebe, 2004). Nzeshi (2012) observes that, the adoption of employment equity programmes like the principles of catchment areas, quota system and federal character has brought about unemployment problems to some segments of the nation. However, Singh (2014) submits that, employment equity programmes attempt to change the composition of the workplace so that employees better reflect the community.

However, the awkward application of the federal character principle tends to pose challenges to the productivity of the Nigerian public service through the circumscription of merit. Such practice of this principle in personnel procurement without regard for merit is more likely to mire efforts at sustainable development. It is against this backdrop that the federal civil service has come under strong criticism because its performance and productivity leaves much to be desired. Nzeshi (2012), attributes its inefficiency to the adoption of the federal character principle which he believes negates the administrative ethics of merit system which emphasizes skill, qualification, experience through training, as the basic criteria for efficiency.

Interestingly, the procedures for recruitment into the Federal Public Service as provided by the Federal Character Commission (FCC) states that, only candidates who have met the basic minimum requirements for each advertised position shall be shortlisted for interview or any other selection process. Under no circumstances shall an unqualified candidate be shortlisted purportedly on the basis of federal character. However, a candidate who has met the basic minimum requirements shall be eligible to compete for posts reserved for his state and/or zone, and shall not be penalized or disadvantaged in favour of a candidate from another state or zone who may possess higher qualifications (AbdulRaheem, 2008). Therefore, it should be pointed out that, employment equity policies and programmes are about fairness in the workplace, not about discrimination in reverse order. Fairness is achieved when no one is denied employment opportunity and no one benefits for reasons unrelated to merit.

### **Interpersonal Relationship and Employment of University Library Staff**

Today, we are witnessing what Nzeshi (2012), calls ‘the balkanization’ of our society in which the best interests of an organization as a whole are often subordinated to the interests of certain individuals or special groups. This situation has led to the preference of individuals who are related in one way or the other to the members of the management team over others during recruitment in libraries, all to the detriment of genuine merit. Iwuagwu (2015), refers to such practice as *prebendalism* and *clientelism* which establishes a political hegemony that favours its loyalists to the exclusion of others.

Prebendalism is a system of spoilt politics where the winner takes it all. Interpersonal relationships (political, religious, biological, professional, social etc) foster prebendalism which solely and exclusively represents the interest of their members. Similarly, clientelism is a channel through which one joins the dominant class and a practice which is seen as fundamental to the continued enjoyment of the prerequisites of that class (Iwuagwu, 2015). Thus,

prebendalism and clientelism are two sides of the same coin by which people, through the help of godfathers to whom they have shown loyalty, receive undue favours like employment, contracts, key appointments, promotions etc while others who may even be more qualified are denied such opportunities.

Indeed, there is a related problem of hiring relatives on the library staff. Long and not always happy experience has confirmed that this should be avoided. Onwubiko (2004) warned that, employees should not be connected in any way to members of the management team, but their recruitment and assimilation into the organization should be based on merit. The author further advises library managers to treat all prospective employees equally, because one thing that impairs library employees' efficiency and morale most quickly is for the library manager or immediate supervisor to display a tinge of favoritism when making decisions. This is more so because when two equals are treated unequally, injustice is born.

According to Iwuagwu (2015), godfatherism as a concept in public sector is borne out of the influences and affluences that the beneficiaries in most cases do not deserve. Where and when godfatherism predominates, those that hover around godfathers do so most times with very impure intentions to court favours for themselves or their acquaintances through the influence of their godfathers. It is a known fact that most appointments in many governmental agencies and institutions are made on mere oral or written recommendation from few influential individuals without reference to competence.

Although Singh (2014), has noted that public service agencies are prone to greater exposure to scrutiny than most private sector organizations; therefore openness and transparency in recruitment and selection practices are crucial. But this is not usually the case. Because sometimes, even when there is embargo on employment, some employers in the government ministries and agencies continue to secretly recruit their friends and relatives who most often do not merit by way of qualification to occupy the positions given to them (Onwubiko 2004). Such action is a form of social injustice that can ultimately hurt the entire society.

The university's policies give special attention, *inter alia*, to the existence of systematic barriers and instances of intentional discrimination in the process of recruitment. Hence, the establishment of Service Commissions with the power to recruit/appoint persons into the Public Service and, in so doing reduce the influence of politicians on the staffing process. To achieve this, the Commissions have influenced the development of legislation and regulations that circumscribe the practice of recruitment, primarily to ensure that no discrimination attends the



exercise. These rules established by the Commissions should enforce compliance in an attempt to minimize or eliminate the possibility of bias on the basis of social status and interpersonal relationship during recruitments in university libraries.

The major concern about the influence of indigene-ship and interpersonal relationship during recruitment exercises in almost every sector in Nigeria especially in university libraries (given the central role they play in tertiary education) is the fact that most young, patriotic, qualified and diligent members of our society without godfathers or godmothers are daily becoming disenchanted and losing hope in their noble quest, of seeking opportunities to contribute their quota in the development of the nation, whereas the beneficiaries are having filled days in their undertakings at the peril of what should be a great nation.

## **Methodology**

The ex-post facto research design was adopted for this study. This design was chosen because the event that generated data for this study took place in the past prior to the conduct of the research. The population of the study consisted of 143 professional and para-professional librarians in Hezekiah Oluwasanmi Library, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife and Kenneth Dike Library, University of Ibadan. A structured questionnaire was used as instrument for data collection. The questionnaire was developed using four-point rating scale responses of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD). The instrument was validated by three validators and further subjected to a reliability test in which an internal consistent coefficient of 0.865 was obtained. Data generated for the study were analysed using simple linear regression; t-test, was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

**Decision Rule:** In testing the hypotheses, where the calculated t-value was less than the critical t-value, it was concluded that there is no significant influence between the variables and the null hypotheses was accepted. On the other hand, where the calculated t-value was greater than the critical t-value, the null hypotheses was rejected indicating a significant influence between the variables tested.

## **Data Analysis and Result**

**Table 1: Summary of the Respondents' Mean Scores on Influence of indigene-ship on Employment of Staff in Selected Federal University Libraries in South-West.**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	$r_\alpha$	$R^2$
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	Influence of indigene-ship (constant)	4.484	.258		0.77	0.599
	Employment of Staff	0.213	.063	.229		

The result as shown in Table 1 reveals the summary of the regression analysis of the influence of indigene-ship on employment of staff in the libraries under study. The result shows that respondents agreed to all the items. The result shows that for every unit rise in indigeneship, employment of staff increases by 0.213. This indicates that indigenship was highly considered during employment. The table also shows that the correlation coefficient ( $\alpha$ ) is 0.77, indicating that there is a very high positive relationship between indigene-ship and employment of staff in the libraries under study. The result also shows that the coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ) is 0.599; this implies that 59.9% changes in employment is as a result of indigene-ship.

**Table 2: Summary of the Respondents' Mean Scores on Influence of interpersonal relationship on Employment of Staff in Selected Federal University Libraries**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	$r_\alpha$	$R^2$
	B	Std. Error	Beta		

1	Influence of interpersonal relationship (Constant)	.289	.632		0.43	0.184
	Employment of staff	.79	.140	.429		

The result presented in Table 2 shows the regression coefficients of interpersonal relationship influence on employment of staff in federal university libraries. The result shows that for every unit rise in interpersonal relationship, employment increases by 0.79. The Table also shows that the correlation coefficient ( $\alpha$ ) is 0.43, indicating that there is a positive relationship between interpersonal relationship influence on employment of staff in federal university libraries. The result also shows that the coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ) is 0.184, this implies that 18.4% changes in employment is as a result of interpersonal relationship.

## Testing the Research Hypotheses

### Hypothesis one

There is no significant influence of indigene-ship on employment of staff in selected federal university libraries in South-West Nigeria.

**Table 3: Summary of Significant Test of influence of indigene-ship on employment of staff in selected federal university libraries in South-West Nigeria**

		Sum of					Decision
Model		Squares	Df	Mean Square	Fcl	Fcrit	
1	Regression	16.892	1	16.892	11.451		
	Residual	303.873	133	1.475		3.936	*sig
	Total	320.764	134				

\*significant

Table 3 shows the summary of the regression analysis of the influence of indigene-ship on employment of staff in the libraries under study. The result shows an f ratio of 11.451. At .05 alpha level, (1, 133) degree of freedom, the Fcrit is 3.936. Since the Fcal is greater than the Fcrit, the null hypothesis is rejected, thus, there is a significant influence of indigene-ship on employment of staff in federal university libraries in South-West Nigeria.

### Hypothesis Two

There is no significant influence of interpersonal relationship on employment of staff in selected federal university libraries in South-West Nigeria.

**Table 4: Summary of Significant Test of influence of interpersonal relationship on employment of staff in selected federal university libraries in South-West Nigeria**

		Sum of					Decision
Model		Squares	Df	Mean Square	Fcal	Fcrit	
1	Regression	39.759	1	39.759	32.489		*sig
	Residual	176.220	133	1.224		3.936	
	Total	215.979	134				

\*significant

Table4 above shows the summary of the regression analysis of the influence of interpersonal relationship on employment of staff in the selected federal university libraries. The result shows an f ratio of 32.489. At .05 alpha level, (1, 133) degree of freedom, the Fcrit is 3.936. Since the Fcal is greater than the Fcrit, the null hypothesis is rejected, thus, there is a significant influence of interpersonal relationship on employment of staff in federal university libraries in South-West Nigeria.

## Discussion of Findings

The result from the analysis on the influence of indigene-ship on employment revealed a significant influence of indigene-ship on employment of staff in selected federal university libraries in South-West Nigeria. This result is possible in view of the fact the indigene and non-indigene syndrome determines a lot of things in getting employment in government establishments as a result of the ethicized and polarized nature of the Nigerian nation. It may also be attributed to discrimination on the basis of indegeniety which is quite problematic because it is tied directly to individuals' access to societal resources including job opportunities. The finding of the study is in line with Nwanegbo, Odigo and Ochanja (2014), whose study reveals that despite the right of residency, being an indigene or non-indigene often has implications for one's access to land, job opportunities, scholarship and political offices. The finding of the study equally correlates with Iwuagwu (2015), who observes that it is near impossible to get jobs in some federal government establishments located in a particular state; or some state government establishments located in a particular local government if one is not an indigene of that locality.

The finding on the influence of interpersonal relationship on employment of staff reveals that there exists a significant influence of interpersonal relationship on employment of staff in the libraries under study. This influence may have been due to the endemic corrupt practices in the public sector where the interests of government establishments are often subordinated to the whims and caprices of few influential individuals otherwise known as godfathers. It could equally be attributed to the towering protection that godfatherism offers to its subjects and beneficiaries which is responsible for the crevices and weaknesses, the abject violation of rules and regulations, gross indiscipline and undue favouritism in federal government institutions. The finding of this study agrees with Olaniyi (2016), who observes that undue influence of interpersonal relationship in Nigeria serves the inordinate ambition of their beneficiaries, which reflects in undeserved employments, placements and promotions that manifest in more gains with less accountability to the detriment of merit and competence.

## **Conclusion**

The raising influence of indigene-ship and interpersonal relationship in employment of staff in federal university libraries as against their silent nature during advertisements of vacancies is worrisome. This study has brought to limelight what transpires in the libraries under study in respect to the studied variables and staff employment. From the findings of the study, it is concluded that, indigene-ship and interpersonal relationship have significant influence on employment in Hezekiah Oluwasanmi Library (HOL) of Obafemi Awolowo University Ile-Ife and Kenneth Dike Library (KDL) of University of Ibadan.

## **Recommendations**

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Employment equity regulating agencies like the Federal Character Commission and Federal Civil Service Commission should promote, monitor and enforce compliance with the principle of proportional sharing of employment opportunities across ethnic and tribal divides in federal government owned institutions in order to eliminate all forms of discrimination on the basis of indigeneity.

2. Management should institute a measure to curtail the raising influence of interpersonal relationship during recruitments and ensure fairness in order to attract highly talented applicants who may be scared away by the activities of godfatherism and interpersonal relationship.

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